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Letter dated 22 February 2006 from the Permanent Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I would be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex, containing the statement by the Witnesses to the Algiers Agreement, circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) John R. **Bolton**

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Annex to the letter dated 22 February 2006 from the Permanent Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Statement by the Witnesses to the Algiers Agreement

The Witnesses to the Algiers Agreement of 12 December 2000 (Algeria, the African Union, the European Union, the United States and the United Nations, the "Witnesses"), met on 22 February at the United Nations. The Witnesses remain fully committed to the implementation of that Agreement, as well as to the Algiers Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities of 18 June 2000 (the "Agreements") and welcome and endorse the initiative by the United States of America, in cooperation with and with the full support of the other Witnesses, to resolve the current impasse in the peace process between Eritrea and Ethiopia in order to promote stability and good relations between the parties and lay the foundation for sustainable peace in the region.

The Witnesses recognize the special role of the African Union and its importance to confidence-building between the parties in support of any initiative in the demarcation process.

The Witnesses stress that the parties must implement the Algiers Agreement of 12 December 2000 fully and without qualification. The Witnesses believe it is crucial that the parties meet their obligations under that Agreement, as well as under the Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities.

Consistent with article 1 of the 12 December 2000 Agreement, each party must refrain from the threat or use of force against the other.

The Witnesses recall that both Ethiopia and Eritrea committed themselves to accepting the delimitation and demarcation determinations of the Eritrea-Ethiopia Boundary Commission as final and binding, under article 4.15 of the Algiers Agreement of 12 December 2000. The Witnesses expect each Government to uphold its commitment and to cooperate with the Commission to implement its decisions without further delay. The Witnesses urge the Commission to convene a meeting with the parties and invite the Commission to consider the need for technical discussions with the support of a neutral facilitator to assist with the process of demarcation. The Witnesses strongly urge the parties to attend the meeting of the Commission and to cooperate with and abide by all requirements specified by the Commission in order to successfully conclude the demarcation process.

The Witnesses commend the role of the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE). The Witnesses urge the parties to permit UNMEE to perform its duties without any restrictions and call on the parties to ensure the free movement of UNMEE personnel in the performance of their responsibilities, including its mandated responsibility, as specified in Security Council resolutions 1430 (2002) and 1466 (2003), including to assist the Commission in the expeditious and orderly implementation of the Delimitation Decision. In particular, the Witnesses note that demarcation of the border cannot proceed unless UNMEE is allowed full freedom of movement throughout its area of operations.

The Witnesses believe the United States initiative agreed today will help resolve the differences between the parties and encourage the United States to pursue it with the parties. The Witnesses also call on the international community to support it, including through continued support for UNMEE and through contributions to the Trust Fund, established pursuant to Security Council resolution 1177 (1998) and referred to in article 4.17 of the Algiers Agreement of 12 December 2000, and to support the demarcation of the border.